



**TESTIMONY REGARDING OF SB 839, AAC STATUTORY
CHANGES TO ADVANCE CONNECTICUT'S ENERGY POLICIES &
HB6360, AAC IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTICUT'S
COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY STRATEGY; TESTIMONY OPPOSING
HB 6531, AN ACT PRESERVING AND RETAINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF IN-STATE
RESOURCES RECOVERY FACILITIES BY JOHN P. MURPHY ON BEHALF OF THE CONNECTICUT
CITIZEN ACTION GROUP AND INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
LOCAL 1228 – MARCH 7, 2013**

Good afternoon, Senators Duff and Chapin; Representatives Reed and Hoydick; members of the committee. My name is John Murphy and I am here to testify on three bills that deal with the CES on behalf of over 20,000 member families of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1228 – SB 839, HB 6360 and HB 6531.

CCAG has fought long and hard for the past 42 years for social, economic, racial and environmental justice. We have long advocated for a comprehensive energy strategy for Connecticut that balances the need for affordable energy for consumers while substantially improving our energy efficiency and expanding our use of clean, renewable resources.

We are heartened that we finally have a comprehensive energy strategy for our state, and we agree with more of the CES than we disagree with. However, we wish that the Governor and DEEP had incorporated more input from the CES hearings from CCAG and other groups from the Connecticut Energy Advocates. In our view, the major flaw of the CES is over reliance on natural gas as the 'bridge' to a future of clean renewable energy sources; while it's not the 'bridge to nowhere', the CES proposal is a "bridge too far".

While the administration says they are not picking winners and losers, they are putting far more effort into natural gas conversion and not enough emphasis into energy efficiency for consumers who will not be able to convert from oil or electric heat to natural gas. Encouraging customers who live on existing natural gas lines to convert to gas for heating is a great idea that should be coupled with energy efficiency programs that far surpass what is currently offered; financing options for energy efficient equipment and energy efficiency that will not be raided and will protect the current and future owners; and protect consumers from shutoff.

When it comes to energy efficiency, Connecticut has done a barely adequate job and needs to improve in achieving greater efficiencies. The most glaring problem is the administration of the program by the utilities who make more revenue when more energy is consumed; there is lip service to conservation, but until we move to decoupling, we will not be able to achieve the efficiencies we need. Decoupling and a real honest, objective evaluation of existing efficiency programs and their outreach are needed to get to where we need to be.

Last year, the Program Review and Investigations Committee received an impact award from the National Council of State Legislatures for energy efficiency studies conducted in 2008-2009 and 2010. The 2008-2009 final study omitted quantified problems with existing energy efficiency programs, including their outreach and administration. Recommendations to objectively evaluate existing programs were also omitted. This committee should revisit the PRI study when rewriting SB 839 and HB 6360 because it makes no sense to make a major investment in high efficiency equipment without increasing accountability and energy saving standards of energy efficiency programs.

CCAG is not convinced that we need 900 miles of additional natural gas pipeline in Connecticut, and is concerned about the stranded costs associated with building those 900 miles that consumers will get stuck with. We should be much more strategic in our pipeline building, and focus our efforts on increasing conversion to high efficiency equipment in locations already served by natural gas.

Also, there could be an over reliance on Hydro Quebec in the RPS that will impede our commitment to clean, renewable sources of energy being developed in Connecticut and the region. The goal should be to allow long term contracts so renewable producers in our region can have some stability.

This committee must consider substitute language for SB 839 and HB 6360 that puts more emphasis on achieving higher efficiency for oil and electric heating that will be unable to convert to natural gas, and needs to institute a small fee on heating oil to pay for oil heat high efficiency conversions as well as energy audits and efficiency programs; electric and natural gas ratepayers shouldn't bear the entire burden of funding efficiency programs.

CCAG is opposed to HB 6531 because it reinforces bad public policy that we need to cut loose and move on from. Since the building of trash to energy generation in Connecticut, there have been quantum leaps in waste recycling technology instead of incineration. Creating tier IIA within the RPS to prop up electric generation by incineration is 180 degrees out of synch with the spirit and the letter of the law of the RPS. Creating a tier IIA classification damages our commitment to clean renewable energy and will only encourage more incineration. Don't make a bad public policy worse.

Finally, although it is not a bill before you today, I hope that this committee would rise up and stop the auction of the standard offer of electricity. Electricity procurement is the purview of this committee, not Finance, Revenue and Bonding. The auction will be bad for consumers, and

is an unprecedented power grab by producers and a total abdication of responsibility to ratepayers by state government. Even if this was a good idea (which it most assuredly is not), savings should go to ratepayers, not the General Fund. The Energy and Technology Committee should be protecting Connecticut's ratepayers. Thank you for your consideration.